



## November

### New Schuylkill Chamber Website Set to Launch in November!

The **countdown is on** to the launch of the Schuylkill Chamber's NEW website. On November 24, 2015 at 8:00 a.m., the Schuylkill Chamber of Commerce will launch our new and improved website, [www.schuylkillchamber.com](http://www.schuylkillchamber.com). The Chamber staff, Board of Directors and Schuylkill Chamber Committees are all very excited about the launch and the features of the new website.

Designed in consultation with **DelPhi Communications, Inc.**, the website has a responsive design that translates well across multiple platforms - desktop, laptop, tablet and smart phone. The new site has been designed to be more user friendly and will really describe what the Chamber does and how it can help your business/organization. The Chamber staff has been working diligently on the website for many months, and cannot wait for everyone to see what it has to offer.

Once on the new website, you can view the upcoming events on a constant loop, have access to event photos, read *the Communicator* and Reflections in a flipbook, view the latest news from Chamber members from around the county and so much more. A click of your mouse will take you to the Chamber's Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest and Google+ pages. The member benefits are front and center, so you will never forget all of the great programs, services and benefits the Chamber offers to its members.

The design of the new website allows for quick changes and additions. Your feedback, as well as any suggestions for improvements on the new website, is welcome.




VISIONARY MEMBERS



Mark your calendar for this special day and be on the lookout the week prior to the launch for an email with your web Member Login credentials. Join in our virtual launch. Login on the day of the website launch, November 24,

between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 11:59 p.m. and your name will automatically be entered into a drawing for a \$100 Visa Gift Card.

The Schuylkill Chamber is very excited to launch our new website. Make sure you login and see what the future has to hold for the Schuylkill Chamber of Commerce and its members. 

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## Member News

**Edwards Business Systems** (EBS), headquartered in Bethlehem has been named an official approved partner in the Xerox Authorized Dealer program. EBS supports the markets of the Lehigh Valley, Reading, Pottstown, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Lewisburg, Pocono Mountains, Scranton/Wilkes-Barre and will carry the Xerox products in all areas.

As an Authorized Xerox Dealer, Edwards Business Systems will offer Xerox products ranging from the smallest printers and multi-functional devices through light production products. In addition, the expert technicians of EBS will be fully trained as authorized service providers on Xerox products.

Ray Fuentes, President of Edwards Business Systems, made the announcement. "We are thrilled to be selected to carry the Xerox lines of quality products. It is a testament to the EBS organization and team members that Xerox supports our equipment expansion and our desire to fully serve our clients." Mr. Fuentes added, "We look forward to bringing the best of Xerox to our clients, who appreciate accountability, service and local decision making. Edwards Business Systems has been in the Pennsylvania marketplace for 61 years and has developed a reputation for an uncommon focus on customer service, cost-effective pricing, efficient supply and delivery combined with innovative products and top-of-the-line support." ☺

*Member News continues on page 4*

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## Health Care Consumerism Headlines November Breakfast

The Schuylkill Chamber of Commerce November breakfast meeting will be held at the **Oak Hill Inn**, 655 Route 61 South, Orwigsburg on Wednesday, November 11, 2015. Breakfast is served at 7:45 a.m. The breakfast is being sponsored and presented by **Power Kunkle Benefits Consulting**.

The program - Health Care Consumerism - What you need to know about Health Care plans, will be presented by Jessica Dean, Employee Benefits Consultant, Power Kunkle Benefits Consulting.

The Affordable Care Act has made health care more complex. At this informative breakfast, Jessica will talk about the Affordable Care Act (is it really "affordable") and rising health care insurance premiums. You will learn how you and your employees can be part of the solution to managing health care costs.

Jessica joined Power Kunkle in May 2010. As an Employee Benefits Consultant, she is responsible for new business development and overall strategic planning and management of her client accounts. Jessica has extensive knowledge of benefits including market trends, plan designs, pricing, funding alternatives, contribution analysis and employee communication.

Jessica began her insurance career in 1997 as an Account Executive for Capital BlueCross. The experience gained during that tenure enables her to develop creative solutions while ef-

ficiently negotiating with the carriers to obtain cost-effective plans to meet each client's individual company philosophy.

Jessica is a graduate of North Schuylkill High School and Shippensburg University. She is an active member in the Schuylkill Chamber of Commerce and the Berks Chapter of Society of Human Resource Manager (SHRM) and has participated on the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce's Employee Benefit Committee. She currently resides in Schuylkill County with her husband and three children.



Jessica Dean

**Power Kunkle Benefits Consulting**, 999 Berkshire Boulevard, Wyomissing, PA 19610, 610-685-1790 - [www.pk-benefits.com](http://www.pk-benefits.com) - is one of the region's premier employee benefits consulting firms, assisting employers

in maximizing their insurance and employee benefit dollars. Power Kunkle Benefits Consulting is the key link between satisfied employers and their employees in the area of their benefits plans. Their first priority is to provide quality service. Power Kunkle employees have the utmost pride in providing superior, proactive and responsive service to all of their clients and their employees.

The cost to attend is \$20 for Chamber members and \$25 for future members. For more information, or to make your reservation, register online at [www.schuylkillchamber.com](http://www.schuylkillchamber.com), contact the Schuylkill Chamber at 570.622.1942/800.755.1942 or email your reservation to [mwalborn@schuylkillchamber.com](mailto:mwalborn@schuylkillchamber.com). Advance reservations are requested. S



*Member News continued from page 2*

**S**even **McCann School of Business & Technology** recent graduates have passed their programmatic National Healthcareer Association (NHA) accreditation exams. These exams validate the skill sets learned in each individual program and are often needed or preferred by employers.

Anne Faulkner (Ashland) and Brianna Rowe (Ashland), graduates of the Phlebotomist program, passed the Certified Phlebotomy Technician Exam.

Donna Hamblen (Pottsville), graduate of the Medical Billing and Coding program, passed the Certified Medical Billing and Coding Exam.

Nicole Correll (Kaska), Michelle Haas (Pottsville), Katherine Mercuri (Pottsville) and Connie Reese (Ashland), graduates of the Medical Assisting Degree program, passed the Clinical Medical Assistant Certification Exam.

McCann covers the cost of the exam, encouraging all students to take their programmatic certification exams. These exams give students a competitive edge in the workforce since many employers either require or prefer candidates to be certified.

The 2015 exam results met the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) requirements, allowing McCann to maintain its programmatic accreditation and uphold its existing certified programs.

NHA has been offering The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) nationally ac-

credited certifications to Allied Health professionals since 1989. §

**T**he Reading Eagle is pleased to announce that John Kutza has joined the company as an advertising sales representative. His focus will be on serving businesses in the Schuylkill County area with an emphasis on the **South Schuylkill News**. Kutza is very familiar with Schuylkill County; he previously worked for the Republican-Herald in Pottsville, and resides in Orwigsburg.



"We are excited to have John on our team," said Lori E. Gerhart, Advertising Director. "We know his knowledge of and passion for the Schuylkill County community will be an asset to our team and to our clients."

The South Schuylkill News is a paid-subscription weekly newspaper providing in-depth news, features, photos, display advertising, classifieds and legal notices throughout southern Schuylkill County. §

**Riverview Bank**, Halifax Bank, and Marysville Bank announce the addition of Christine Zanis to their trust and wealth management division. As Vice President and Senior Trust Officer, Mrs. Zanis will over-

see all aspects of trust business development, administration, and operations for the organization. Her office will be located in the Bank's newly acquired office center on Woodglen Road, Pottsville PA, and can be contacted by phone at 570-336-4021 or by e-mail at [czanis@riverviewbankpa.com](mailto:czanis@riverviewbankpa.com).



Mrs. Zanis has extensive experience in Trust Management, with previous employment history as a Vice President and Account Officer at National Penn Investors Trust Company, Vice President and Trust Officer at Susquehanna Trust & Investment Company and Senior Trust Officer and Department Manager of Community Banks Trust Services. She is a graduate of Bloomsburg University and the PBA Central Atlantic School of Trust at Bucknell University.

Brett D. Fulk, President of Riverview Bank, states "the addition of Christine Zanis, a well-known and respected senior trust officer in our market area, demonstrates Riverview's continuing commitment to growth in the trust and wealth management services division, a core business unit within our bank."

*Member News continues on page 6*



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## Schuylkill Chamber Staff Recognized at PACP Annual Leadership Conference

Three Schuylkill Chamber of Commerce staff members were recognized and honored at the Pennsylvania Association of Chamber Professionals (PACP) & Leadership Conference held on October 14-16 in Williamsport.

Honored as a newly elected member of the PACP Board of Directors, Robert S. Carl, Jr. was elected as the Treasurer/Corporate Secretary. Board members serve in the volunteer leadership role for a specified term, developing and leading the annual Plan of Action to assist in the enhancement of quality education in professional and organizational development to its members. Key events for PACP include the Annual

Chamber Professionals & Leadership Conference, Chamber Day in Harrisburg, and ongoing professional development webinars and programs.

Andrea Feathers and Vanessa Mihoda were also recognized and awarded PACP's distinguished Service Awards at the 2015 PACP Chamber Professionals & Leadership Conference. PACP recognizes



Pennsylvania Association  
of Chamber Professionals

chamber professionals who have served any five-year increment in chamber management. To qualify, candidates must have

been in full-time chamber or chamber-sponsored affiliate management for at least five years, must now be serving in chamber management in Pennsylvania, and must have been a PACP member for at least three consecutive years. Vanessa received her 20-Year Service Award and Andrea received her 5-Year Service Award.

PACP is the professional association of Pennsylvania local chambers of commerce executives and others employed in positions complementary to chamber of commerce work whose mission is to enhance the quality and relevance of chamber management in the Commonwealth of PA. 3



Vanessa M. Mihoda, Communications Director, 20-Year Service Award; Robert S. Carl, Jr., Executive Director, PACP Treasurer/Corporate Secretary; and Andrea M. Feathers, Financial/Administrative Director, 5-Year Service Award.

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of Commerce members who  
are celebrating their  
membership anniversary  
this month.**



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**Doctor's Choice**

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**Tompkins VIST Bank | Insurance**

**10 Years**

**Reading Stove Company**

**1 Year**

**Frontier Communications  
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**IMG, Blue Mountain Pediatrics  
Koch's Turkey Farm - LVE, Inc.**



### Affiliate News

**The Greater Shenandoah  
Chamber of Commerce** will once  
again be lighting the streets of

Shenandoah with  
their Christmas  
decorations. Santa  
Claus will be at  
the park on Friday,  
November 27 from  
6:00-8:00 p.m. ☺



### Lebanon Family Health Services

615 Cumberland St.

Lebanon, PA 17042

Ms. Vicki DeLoatch

Phone: 717-273-8893

Fax: 717-273-6337

[vicki@lebanonfamilyhealth.org](mailto:vicki@lebanonfamilyhealth.org)

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Health/Education Services

### South Schuylkill News

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[www.readingeagle.com](http://www.readingeagle.com)

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### Newly Added Participants

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#### The Herring Group

511 Schwartz Valley Road

Schuylkill Haven, Pa 17972

570-573-9255

[www.theherringgroup.com](http://www.theherringgroup.com)

*Member News continued from page 4*

Mrs. Zanis and her family reside in Pottsville where she is active in her community, having served as a treasurer of the John S. Clarke Elementary PTO; past treasurer of the Pottsville Rotary Little League Mother's Auxiliary; past treasurer of the PAHS Cross Country Boosters and past treasurer of PAHS Mother's Football Boosters. She has served for many years on the board of the Good Samaritan Foundation, Inc. ☺

**S**chuylkill Health will host a Veteran's Day Breakfast on Saturday, November 7 from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. in the Wall Auditorium, Third Floor (near Main Lobby) at **Schuylkill Medical Center East Norwegian Street**, 700 East Norwegian Street, Pottsville. The breakfast is for Veterans and for those currently serving in the U.S. Military. Registration is preferred by calling our events line at 570-621-5141.

For additional information, please call 570-621-5555 or visit our website [www.schuylkillhealth.com](http://www.schuylkillhealth.com). ☺

**Miller Bros. Construction** completed a sitework project in early October at the Roedersville Game & Fish Association in southern Schuylkill County. The work was an in-kind donation from Miller Bros. to benefit the Pine Grove Youth Hunter Education Challenge (YHEC) and will be recognized by the community as a "Make a Difference Day" volunteer effort on October 24.

The scope of work consisted of soil cut and fill along with landscaping to create a shooting range and backstop berm. Completion of landscape seeding and mulching occurred during the week of October 5. ☺



## October is Energy & Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Our home energy and your personal information have something in common: You don't want either one leaking undetected to the outside world.

October is a good time to pay attention to both, since it is Energy Awareness Month and Cybersecurity Awareness Month.

Sure, it seems like every day, week and month nowadays is set aside for some kind of "awareness," but energy use and information security are both worth thinking about. In both areas, some simple, smart steps can spare you cost and hassle down the line.

First, some tips that can save you energy and money as the weather starts to turn colder:

- Heating is the single biggest energy expense in your home. Steps you can take to manage your heating costs include sealing leaks in your air ducts, making sure your walls and attic are properly insulated, and installing a programmable thermostat that lets you lower the temperature overnight or when no one is home.
- Switch to light-emitting diode bulbs, or LEDs, which use up to 75 percent less energy and last up to 20 times longer than traditional incandescent bulbs.
- Unplug chargers and power adaptors when not in use. Also, appliances like computers and home entertainment systems continue to use "phantom power" even when they're not in active use. Plug them into

power strips that let you power down devices you're not using.

- Visit *PaPowerSwitch.com* and see what offers competitive energy suppliers are posting. Since energy use makes up the largest part of your monthly bill, switching providers could save you money. Be sure to check the terms of any offer, such as whether it is a fixed or variable rate.



You can find more energy-saving tips, as well as information on residential and business rebates, at [www.pplelectric.com/save-energy-and-money.aspx](http://www.pplelectric.com/save-energy-and-money.aspx).

And, some tips to help you protect your personal information online:

- If you contact a company – including PPL Electric Utilities -- through social media, don't post your account number in a place where everyone can see it. Send it through a private or direct message if the company

suggests you do so. Or, make a follow-up contact by phone.

- Be wary of email requests that appear to be from companies you know, asking for your password or other personal info. "Phishing" scams that try to get your information get more clever every year. Tipoffs of this type of scam include misspelled words, clumsy writing, and links that don't connect to the real website of the company being impersonated.
- Avoid using easily guessed passwords, like "password" or your name. It's also a good idea not to use the exact same password for multiple accounts, no matter how easy it is to remember. Do an online search for "smart password" for tips on how to set up strong passwords.

Take care, be aware, and let's keep both our electricity and our personal information in the places where they will do us the most good. ☺

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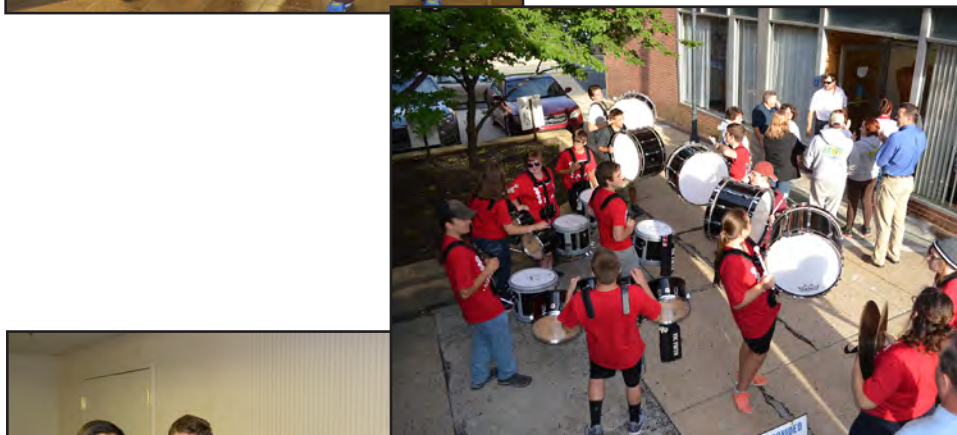
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## Member Shots

High school students from across Schuylkill County participated in **McCann School of Business & Technology's** 6<sup>th</sup> Annual High School Career Day on Friday, October 2, 2015. Over 140 high school seniors representing Minersville, North Schuylkill, Pine Grove, Tam-aqua and Schuylkill Haven Area High Schools attended.

"This was a great opportunity for high school seniors to understand the various career choices and employment opportunities available to them in Schuylkill County," said Lori Kane, High School & Community Relations Coordinator for McCann.

McCann introduced a number of career paths to the students in attendance, including: Business, Criminal Justice, Paralegal, Network Administration, Massage, Phlebotomy/Allied Health/Medical Billing and HVAC/Electrical.

At the event, local professionals were on hand to share his or her "real life" work experiences and the path that they took to get there. McCann Program Directors were also available to answer student inquiries.

Speakers for the day included: Gerald Daley, **Schuylkill County Sheriff's Office**; Joseph Drasdis, **Empire Education Group**; Tim Coyle, **Mrs. T's Pierogies**; Tim Brady, Tredegar; Trooper David Beohm, who serves as Public Information Officer for the PA State Police; Mark Weiderhold, who serves as Controller for **Cougle's Recycling**; Tom Kowalsky, Human Resources Director for SCI Mahanoy & Frackville; John Platchko, **Winsor Staffing** and Tracie Kellagher, W.A. DeHart Inc.



Jeffrey E. O'Neill, Vice President and Team Leader **M&T Bank** presented a Charitable Foundation Check to Denise S. Calderone, **Schaeffer's Harley Davidson**, and Joanne Parulis of **Joanne Parulis Marketing and Communications**, co-chairs of the Schuylkill MDA Black and Blue Ball which was held on Saturday, October 17, at the **Schuylkill Country Club** in Orwigsburg.



**Hawk Mountain Sanctuary** Education Director Erin Brown and an American kestrel joined **M & T Bank** representatives to receive a \$5,000 sponsorship for the organization's premier weekend raptor program, "Raptors Up Close!" Pictured front from left are Erin Brown, Bonnie Miller, Bryan Geiger, Debra Kukta, Stephanie Jepko-Menapace, Ken Stolarick, and Hawk Mountain President Jerry Regan. Pictured in the rear are Jeffrey O'Neill and Jeff Wessner.

The popular live raptor show is presented free of charge every Saturday and Sunday from late August through Thanksgiving at 10 a.m., noon, and 2 p.m. During spring, the program is held at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. on weekends from April through mid June.



Get your company's or organization's news in print!  
Email your news to  
[vmihoda@schuylkillchamber.com](mailto:vmihoda@schuylkillchamber.com).







## Committee Updates

### Government Affairs - October 1, 2015

The first item discussed on the agenda was the PA 2015-2016 State Budget. The Chairman said that the passage of the PA Budget does not look promising. An update from Rep. Tobash's office included that another veto on selected Budget line items came down yesterday. There is no support for broad based tax increases. House Leader Rep. Reed, from the House, and Senate Leader Senator Corman, are going to introduce a Stop Gap Spending Budget before the House and the Senate on Wednesday to be voted on. A perceived problem is that State employees are not feeling any "urgency" because they are still getting paid, but fiscal pressure is mounting on the business owners and non-profits. The Executive Director stated that even if the PA Budget were passed tomorrow, it would still have long lasting effects. Also, it is very important to Pennsylvania that the budget is not passed without pension reform.

Education, Pension and Liquor Privatization are all currently negotiable. Rep. Tobash's office reported that there is no time-line on moving forward, there is no funding on anything and there are no new negotiations on the table at the moment. A committee member asked if Education Income Tax Credits (EITC) could still go to public schools while the Budget is on hold. It was confirmed that if approved, they can. The Executive Director informed the committee that the Schuylkill YEA! Program through the Schuylkill Chamber Foundation was approved for EITC funding requests. A committee member also noted that EITC approved organizations need to be pre-approved each year to receive EITC contributions.

The Chairman spoke about the Commissioner Candidate Debate Breakfast. Chairman John Powers asked the committee to put the flyer out on Facebook and get the information out to everyone they know so that the committee can have great attendance for the event. The Executive Director said that this event is for members and non-members of the Chamber; there is a rate for members and non-members. The Chairman sent out two separate e-mails to the Republican and Democratic candidates and asked for their top Commissioner Office issues. The candidates replied with their top

issues including Emergency Management 911 radios, the Rest Haven Skilled Nursing Facility transition, the County Prison overcrowding, Blight, the Empire property acquisition, economic development, outmigration of youth and the value of the Commissioner's Youth Summit program, the State Budget impacts, public safety and Veterans outreach programs. The Chairman informed the committee that they could suggest topics to be addressed as well as questions.

The Chairman shared with the committee the brochure for the Newly Elected Officials Seminar and Dinner on November 19, 2015. The Executive Director will finalize and confirm with the officials that have been elected. ARRO Consulting is the sponsor for the event. The committee was asked to push this event on their Facebook pages also.

The next item on the agenda was the Visionary and Premier Chamber Members Inaugural Leadership Council Luncheon – featuring a roundtable discussion with Congressman Matt Cartwright scheduled for October 30, 2015. This is an exclusive event for Visionary and Premier Chamber membership levels only. The Executive Director stated that the 6 Visionary members and the 7 Premiere members would have the opportunity to attend and have a casual conversation with Congressman Cartwright.

The Executive Director reviewed the major issues with the Schuylkill County Vocational Technical Program related to the 12 County school districts. The Chairman said that the business community should be attending meetings when parents are there to inform them of the great opportunities that a Vocational Technical Program offers to our youth for career/job paths. Rep. Tobash's office informed the committee that at the end of October, they would be presenting to all of the counties school guidance counselors about the manufacturing opportunities in this county.

A committee member suggested that Schuylkill Women in Business (SWIB) hold a luncheon and invite female high school students to educate them to the opportunities they have. Rep. Tobash's office, including Rep. Tobash, will be meeting with legislative leaders in Harrisburg to discuss amending the amount of standardized testing in schools which can be an impediment to non-traditional educational advancements. A committee member stated that some families believe

a child can only be successful if they go to college and that parents need to also be educated on the Vocational Technical program opportunities. The Government Affairs Committee will stay involved with our State delegation regarding the importance of this matter.

### Transportation - October 22, 2015

Ron Young joined the meeting via conference phone. The contractor is pouring the deck for the Mady Bridge Rt. 61 Project today. The Executive Director noted that the PennDOT Supervisor on the Mady Bridge Project, Gary Farabaugh, is very good about giving the Chamber advance notices when lanes will be impacted so that we can communicate this to our members. The time-line for completion of the project is November of 2016.

Route 443 paving from Route 309 to the Carbon County Line is beginning shortly and will go until next August. This is an Act 89 project awarded for \$3.5 million. The contractor will be working during the hours of 7:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M.

The Deer Lake Route 61 Project is slated for completion by the end of November 2015. All four lanes should be open at that time. There will still be some work being done, but it will not impact traffic flow.

Work on the Route 61 Project in Schuylkill Haven continues. The contractor has moved to the northbound lanes. This work is scheduled for completion in August of 2016.

The I-81 project continues in the Ravine area. Work will cease during the winter months and all lanes will be open. The lanes will switch in the spring when work resumes. Completion is scheduled for the spring of 2017.

The Route 61 Frackville grade project is going to design and is scheduled to go to bid in the summer of 2019.

Jason Bower questioned work in the area of Sheetz – 901/209 Bridge. He was approached to sign a paper for a right away for this project. There is scheduled bridgework at this location. Chair Yashinsky noted that the road at that location is really chewed up and should be resurfaced. It would also be good if this work could be done when the Route 901/209 light at the Turkey Hill work was being done. PennDOT will check on this.

Chair Yashinsky questioned whether the lack of Federal Transportation Funding would impact work in Pennsylvania, since there are matching funds on some projects. Bill Hanley noted that U.S. Rep.



Schuster has put forth a bill with level funding. The bill is status quo on funding. We do need a long-term transportation funding bill.

The Executive Director noted that, in a meeting with Congressman Cartwright, the Congressman was optimistic regarding transportation funding. Bill Hanley noted that it now depends on the new Speaker of the House and what he wants to move.

The Executive Director inquired if there was a federal stream of dollars to be coupled with Pennsylvania dollars that are now impacted by the PA budget crisis. Ron Young, PennDOT, noted that the dollars are not in the State general appropriations and therefore not tied to the PA Budget crisis. Ron Young also noted that some projects might be put on hold until the federal dollars are released for the bigger projects. The PA Budget crisis may also affect the letting of new projects. Bill Hanley asked Ron to let them know beforehand if there are any projects in District 5 that require a federal funding extension.

John DeAngelo questioned the Route 924 project outside of Frackville. Ron Young reported that nothing has changed and the work on this section should be completed. It is currently down to one lane northbound and appears it will remain that way. John noted that this section of highway in the upcoming winter months could become a problem. With the barrier, there is no room for error on the part of the drivers. If there would be an accident northbound, the road would be closed due to the Jersey barriers. Chair Yashinsky felt that the work to reopen both lanes needs to be on the LRTP (Long Range Transportation Plan).

Other concerns on that section of highway include the bridge at the Gilberton exit. It is in poor shape and needs work/replacement.

Ron Young noted that PennDOT currently has a promotion for school bus safety. They will be targeting offenders and a police officer will be on some buses with a chase car in the vicinity. A discussion was held regarding divided highways and the need to stop for a school bus. The rule is that, on a divided highway, the oncoming traffic does not need to stop.

Ron Young readdressed the Route 924 work. The project for the rest of the Route 924 work from Frackville to Ringtown is expected to go to bid in

2018.

The NEPA NPO meeting is today. Susan Smith, Matt Boyer, Dave Bekisz and Frank Barone are at that meeting.

Chair Yashinsky reported that he was at a meeting of the Township Supervisors. Norwegian Township thanked the Chamber Transportation Committee for their work in getting the light at Route 209/901 at Turkey Hill. Ron Yong noted that the work for this would go to bid next May.

Dan Yelito noted that the public meeting regarding the transportation plan will be today at noon at the SEDCO/Schuylkill Chamber conference center. There are a total of four remote sites – Monroe County Transportation Authority, 911 in Carbon County and the Pike County Court House. The meeting is for public involvement in the TIP and LRTP.

Kevin Steele raised a concern regarding the temporary light on Route 61 at Brick Hill Road. Traffic coming onto Route 61 from Orwigsburg making the left to go southbound is holding up other cars that are making a left or right turn onto Route 61 from the jug handle on the opposite side. The question was asked whether there are any plans to put in an additional lane for turns or perhaps a delayed signal to allow the southbound traffic to flow. Members of the committee also noted that there is a similar problem at the Route 895 light in Deer Lake. Ron Young noted that he would have to look into this.

Senator Argall's office addressed the problem on the Gordon Mountain Road and truck accidents. This is an ongoing issue with trucks and the Borough of Gordon has asked Senator Argall's office for assistance on this matter. Mike Rebert is coming up to meet with members of Gordon's Borough Council.

John DeAngelo noted that the Hazleton Industrial Park has signage in both English and Spanish and doing that may be of some help. The regulations for CDL licensing are federal and it is not a requirement that the drivers speak English. The test can be taken in other languages and can even be given orally. Chair Yashinsky would like to determine whom the committee can speak to regarding this matter.

Tina Fink brought up the issue with the Deer Lake Industrial Park and truck traffic. Jim Turner, West Brunswick Supervisor, met with SEDCO regarding this issue and they are looking at additional signage for the turn. Kevin Steele noted

that trucks could turn both at Municipal Road and Pheasant Run Road. Additional signage at Pheasant Run Road may defer traffic going down the back roads if they miss the first turn.

Bill Hanley, Congressman Cartwright's office, thanked the committee and Bob Williams, Orwigsburg Borough Manager for their work on the naming of Route 61 and 443 in the memory of Captain Jason B. Jones and Corporal Dave F. Heiser respectively.

Jerry Newswanger noted that traffic on I-81 has found that Pine Grove Borough is a good alternate route due to the I-81 construction and traffic through the Borough has increased. Jerry also thanked PennDOT for their School Bus Safety Campaign.

Ron Young updated the committee that the work on the Route 924 Shenandoah bridge is on the P3 list for next year in late spring, the Gilberton Exit bridge is slated for mid-2017 replacement, the Route 209-901 bridge by Sheetz over the railroad tracks is slated for this time next year.

Dan Yelito reported that the Schuylkill County Borough Association meets on Monday, October 26 at First United Church of Christ on Route 61 in Schuylkill Haven at 6:00 P.M. Schuylkill County is the only county in his area that has a boroughs association.

#### **Member Services - October 13, 2015**

Monica Walborn stated that the Chamber staff has a goal for themselves of one new Chamber member per staff member a month. The overall new member goal per month is 6. The Executive Director stated that he would like the Chamber Board Members to assist in engaging new members. The plan to be presented at the Chamber October Board Meeting is that each board member will help recruit one new member to the Chamber a year. We will implement a tracking sheet for Chamber Board Member recruitment achievements.

A tiers update was given by Monica Walborn. Monica and the Executive Director have had 50 tiers meetings to date. The Chamber currently has 6 Visionary members, 7 Premiere members, 12 Executive members and 3 Partner members. Four of the businesses that they met with chose to stay at their current tier and 7 businesses are still undecided. The Executive Director stated that they had a great



meeting with the Pottsville Area School District Administration and they will be having another meeting with the School Board next week.

An update on the Member Engagement Plan was given. The objective of the Member Engagement Plan is to continue ongoing engagement with existing Chamber members and mentor new Chamber members to build relationships for sustainable growth. The Chair of the Member Engagement Sub-Committee is Jennifer Tahaney. The sub-committee will make phone calls, survey existing members, deliver welcome packets and engage new members to the Chamber.

Two new Member2Member Program offerings were presented to the committee: one from the Herring Group and one from Looking Your Best, Inc. Both of these offerings were approved by the committee. The committee discussed how Chamber members would inform businesses that they are members. Monica Walborn suggested a membership card that members could download from the Chamber website once they login through the membership login page. Mark Wiederhold and Michael Keeney suggested exploring a phone app where people could pull up the membership card.

Samantha Albion and Monica Walborn gave an update on research of affinity programs. A program called Save Local Now was discussed where members can directly upload information to our website and that it will post to all of their social media pages. Training for our members would be included for one year. A committee member stated that someone would need to monitor what members are uploading so no one would post inappropriate information to our website. This program could eventually take the Weekend Update off of the Communication Director's workload because the members would be creating it themselves on the website.

Andrea Feathers, Financial/Administrative Director, gave an update on the Chamber's new website. The Visionary members will have links to their profile via their logos on the Chamber website home page that will take you to their company profile. Once the WebLink "skins" are in, the old website will be taken down and the new one will launch. Chairman Lutsey suggested that the Chamber make a big deal of the website launching and Cynthia Mensch suggested

that might be accomplished via a virtual launch party.

Monica informed the committee that concentration on Small Business would remain an important agenda item for the Member Services Committee.

The committee discussed the Member Appreciation Event. There were 198 members registered. The Walk In Art Center and Evans Network of Companies went above and beyond. The food from Pottsville Provision was a big hit. The donations from D.G. Yuengling & Son and Wegmans were greatly appreciated. Suggestions were reviewed regarding the next Member Appreciation Mixer.

The committee discussed the Walk for Progress/Taste of Schuylkill Event. The Executive Director thought that this year's Walk for Progress event was the best one the Chamber has ever held and he thanked Deb Kukta, Chairman, M&T Bank for all of her hard work. The donated bags from Wegmans and all of the food sampled at the Taste of Schuylkill event were well received. There were 159 walkers that participated and 19 food vendors. M&T Bank won the prize for largest team and Dunkin Donuts won the prize for most spirited team.

The upcoming Commissioner Candidates Debate Breakfast and the importance of attendance were reviewed.

### **Member Services Member Engagement Subcommittee - October 13, 2015.**

A recap was given of what was discussed at the last meeting. The committee discussed how they would like to contact new members. They would like to make connections with new members right away by making a phone call, sending an e-mail, delivering their membership packet within the first two weeks and have a face-to-face conversation with the new member.

The committee was informed that the Chamber staff is conducting a member outreach program and will contact each member of the Chamber by phone or e-mail at least once a year.

It was suggested that an Ambassador contact the new member to set up a time to deliver their membership packet to make sure that the main contact person will be there to receive it in person. The committee would like to have the membership packet delivered to the new members within the first two weeks after formal approval. The committee would

like to come up with a system to match the Ambassadors to the new Chamber members.

The Executive Director suggested the possibility of putting on the Chamber application questions such as: How were you referred to the Chamber? Did a Chamber member approach you about becoming involved? and How did you hear about the Chamber?

The committee needs to make sure the Ambassador will continue with new member contact throughout the first year of membership. It was pointed out that businesses/non-profits need to let their employees know if they are a part of the Chamber of Commerce.

A suggestion was made of the possibility to include a Welcome Video from the Chamber's Executive Director in an e-mail for new members. The topic of Chamber anniversaries was also brought up. The committee thinks a letter should be sent out notifying a member of their Chamber anniversary. A suggestion was made of running a tab at the top of the Chamber's website announcing members that have anniversaries that month. Also, the committee believes members should be given a social media shout-out upon renewal with the Chamber.

The Chamber staff will be the ambassador's liaison. The Executive Director stated that this would be a team effort for the Chamber since there is not a membership director. New members would be notified in their welcome of why an ambassador is going to be assigned to them. The committee should assign the ambassador as early as possible. The ambassador assigned to the new member will be noted in their welcome packet. The committee would like to hold an Ambassador Orientation for any Chamber members that would like to become an ambassador.

The committee suggested having an Ambassador Committee. The Ambassador Committee would meet on a monthly basis to discuss what is working and what is not working. The committee would like to look for Chamber Past Presidents to be ambassadors. Member Services Chairman Lutsey stated that the committee needs to come up with a description of what an ambassador is and that the committee needs to hold an ambassador orientation. The committee also agreed that ambassadors should attend all types of events, not just mixers.

*Committees continue on page 15*

## Chamber Sightings



John Matz, **Schuylkill County Emergency Management**, Mary Beth Matz, **Schuylkill Area Community Foundation**; Mike Keeney, **Edwards Business Systems**; Carol Tassone, **Ruby's Kitchen**; Kris Guers, **Schuylkill Rehabilitation Center**; Chris Helman, **Schuylkill Health**; and Mike Kaucher, **RTC Direct Mail**, enjoy networking at the **M&T Bank-Vito's Coal Fired** mixer.



**CHECK OUT ADDITIONAL EVENT PHOTOS ON FACEBOOK!**



Dave Wilson, **Aflac District Office**; Tina Fink, **D.G. Yuengling & Sons**; Toni Everdale, **St. Clair & Associates**; Kevin Steele, **H.B. Steele & Son**; and Jessica Dean, **Power Kunkle Benefits Consulting**, enjoy each other's company at the Business After 5 O'clock Mixer.



The Mixer co-hosts Kelly & Vito Valenti, **Vito's Coal Fired Pizza & Restaurant** and Debra Kukta, **M&T Bank**, take a breather during the excitement of the mixer.



Brian Leffler, Angela Mestishen Regnier and Ryan Barilla, **Schlitz-Allen-Pugh Funeral Home**; catch up with Kim Mazin.



Frederick Huber and Aggie Sophy, **Sophy Jewelers**, catch up with Jeff Wessner, **M&T Bank**.



Donna Monaghan, **Manpower, Inc.**; Brooke Shilling, **Schuylkill County Court House**; Noreen O'Boyle, **Holiday Inn Express**; and Trish Baker enjoy the mixer.



Bob Green, **Green's Communications**, catches up with his friends-longer-than-either-cares-to-admit friend Vanessa Mihoda, **Schuylkill Chamber**.



Karen Domalakes, **Frackville BPA**; Mary Beth Dougherty, **Senator David Argall's Office**, Asseneth Savitsky, **Geisinger**; and Scob Savitsky enjoy the festivities.



*Committees continued from page 13*

The Executive Director questioned whether the Chamber would need to offer an incentive program for ambassadors who perform admirably and dedicate time to engagement. An example might be that after an ambassador fully mentors a new member they could receive a complimentary breakfast. The subcommittee was asked to start thinking of members that they believe would be good ambassadors so they can be discussed at the next meeting. The ambassadors need to understand the Chamber orientation and the member benefits. The committee also agreed that the Chamber needs to begin tracking new members and track a members attendance at Member Orientation.

#### **Education** - October 28, 2015.

The Committee has several upcoming sessions planned. Please see the flyer inserts for registration and additional information.

The Committee continues to flesh out upcoming sessions and discussed topics and options for additional educational programming. Sessions will be scheduled in both the Seminars (\$25 or less) and Professional Development Series (\$30 and up) over the program year. The goal of the Committee is to schedule at least one of each type of session every month.

#### **Non-Profit** - October 26, 2015

Committee Co-Chair, Lisa Robinson, discussed the committee objectives and pointed out the addition in the objective from the last meeting. The committee believes they should also work to retain current Chamber members, while also attracting new members, through more targeted education and programming.

Committee member, Eileen Kuperavage, is putting together a list of all the non-profits in Schuylkill County. She tried to get this information from PANO and they referred her to the Urban Institute. Michelle Halabura will be sending Eileen a website that may help her with this research. Eileen is also researching Crisis and Disaster Planning as a potential presentation for the August 2016 Non-Profit Lunch & Learn event.

Co-Chairman Lisa stated that the Chamber currently has 115 Non-Profit members. Monica Walborn stated that the Chamber might partake in a "We

Want You Back" initiative discussed at the Chamber Board of Directors Meeting thinking that some Non-Profits might not have renewed due to struggling financial streams because of the PA Budget crisis. The non-profits are struggling without a budget and therefore some of them might not renew their membership. If this was disclosed to the Chamber, they would have found assistance but some non-profits might not have disclosed this problem at membership renewal. This "We Want You Back" initiative would allow non-profit members to come back at their initial rate.

The committee discussed the upcoming Lunch & Learn events. The next event will be held on November 5, 2015 with a presentation by SCORE and will be held at the Chamber. The Co-Chair reminded the committee to use the call list and script to invite the non-profits to this event. Steve Bobick and Russ Hoke were provided more information on what they should present at the 50th Anniversary SCORE Lunch last week. There will also be Lunch & Learns on February 4, 2016, March 3, 2016 and August 4, 2016.

The Chamber budgeted for four Non-Profit Lunch & Learn Events throughout the year. February and March are back to back and the committee will be bypassing the May Lunch & Learn due to the Chamber's Annual Luncheon.

The committee is well prepared with future topics. Eileen Kuperavage received a resource on "Telling Your Story" and how to incorporate it into your website and getting your message across to your community.

It was suggested that SCORE have a program through the Chamber called "Consultants on Call", where non-profits could call if they had any type of question.

The committee suggested that the Chamber needs to do a better job of informing members about Non-Profits. They suggested a separate non-profit update, or including a non-profit update in the weekend update once a month. They also suggested putting in testimonials and success stories in the Chamber's newsletter, The Communicator.

#### **Schuylkill Women in Business (SWIB)**

- October 20, 2015

The committee felt that the September Speed Networking Event went very well. They heard a lot of great feedback from everyone. It was suggested of having that type of event twice a year and having it in a more central location.

Everything is set for the October SWIB Event. Cynthia Mensch will be presenting a program called "Mastering the Art of Delegation in Today's Workplace." Luther Ridge will be the sponsor. The caterer will be The Brickhouse Grill.

Due to a job change and time constraints, the Schuylkill Women in Business Committee Chair, Christy Rebehn, temporarily stepped down from her position. She will still be involved in the committee, and will join in more once she settles into her new job. The Chamber asked Cynthia Mensch if she would be interested in serving as Chair and she stated that she would.

The committee agrees that they would like to keep having the meetings on the third Tuesday of the month at 9:00 A.M.

#### **Agribusiness** - October 23, 2015.

A discussion was held on the articles the committee is doing for South Schuylkill News. The schedule of upcoming articles was reviewed. A discussion was held on ideas for future articles. Committee members are needed to help write articles. If you can help, or have an idea for an article, please let Christy Rebehn, Andrea Geist, or Missy Seigfried know. Christine suggested the article that was written on the Schuylkill County Grown program be submitted to other news outlets. Other area newspapers will be contacted.

It was noted that the Farmers Market Map needs to be updated. More information on this will be brought to a future meeting.


Schuylkill County Grown packets are available to hand out to local farmers. The packets include a cover letter, application, SASE and 25 produce tags. If committee members know of a producer/farmer that could benefit from the Schuylkill County Grown program please consider getting a packet to them. Please call Missy or Andrea for packets (570-622-3742 x111). Also, applications and a SASE will be sent out to farmers on the Farm Market Map. 3

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